

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

<h1 style="margin: 0;">FSIS NOTICE</h1>	18-09	3/12/09
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**CHANGES IN SAMPLING FREQUENCY FOR *E. coli* O157:H7 TESTING IN RAW
GROUND BEEF**

This notice announces that inspection program personnel (IPP) may receive FSIS Form 10,210-3, Requested Sample Programs, for *E. coli* O157:H7 sampling and testing of raw ground beef products (MT43) at the following monthly rates:

- Up to 4 times within a 30-day window (See block 4 of FSIS form 10,210-3) for establishments with ground beef product production volumes of greater than 250,000 lb/day, as estimated and recorded in block 28 of FSIS Form 10,210-3 each time a sample is collected.
- Up to 3 times within a 30-day window (See block 4 of FSIS form 10,210-3) for establishments with ground beef product production volumes of 50,000 to 250,000 lb/day, as estimate and recorded in block 28 of FSIS Form 10,210-3 each time a sample is collected.
- Up to 2 times within a 30-day window (See block 4 of FSIS form 10,210-3) for establishments with ground beef product production volumes of 1,000 to 50,000 lb/day, as estimated and recorded in block 28 of FSIS Form 10,210-3 each time a sample is collected.
- Generally, no more than once within a 30-day window (See block 4 of FSIS form 10,210-3) for establishments with ground beef product production volumes of less than 1,000 lb/day, as estimated and recorded in block 28 of FSIS Form 10,210-3 each time a sample is collected. However, FSIS will ensure that at these establishments at least one sample is collected quarterly.

FSIS is increasing sampling at high volume ground beef establishments because these establishments produce product that is most widely consumed. The increase in sampling will allow the Agency to estimate the amount of uncontaminated raw ground beef with a higher degree of certainty.

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At the weekly meeting following the receipt of this notice, IPP are to discuss with the establishment management:

1. these changes in sampling,
2. the establishment's lotting procedures, and
3. if the establishment does not already have written procedures for holding lots tested by FSIS, whether the establishment intends to hold the sampled lots.

When more than one sample is scheduled to be collected during the 30-day sample window, IPP are to randomly select a day, shift, and time to collect a maximum of two samples.

- IPP are to collect verification samples within the 30-day sample window starting from the sample collection date indicated in Block 4 of the form, but not before this date.
- IPP may collect two samples per day as long as each sample corresponds to a microbiologically independent and individually identifiable lot of product.
 - However, IPP are not to collect two samples per day if the establishment cannot continue to operate under that sampling frequency (e.g., because the establishment cannot fill orders and hold all sampled product) or because the inspection program personnel's workload cannot accommodate that sampling frequency. Under these circumstances, IPP should collect a single sample.
- In all cases, IPP are to collect at least one sample per FSIS Form 10,210-3 whenever a sample request form is received and product is produced and available during the 30-day window.

At establishments producing more than 250,000 lbs/day, IPP may find that the establishment has written procedures to grind a minimum batch of product that represents the entire lot in a smaller grinder. Establishments with these written procedures will typically have supporting documentation that describes why their minimum batch is representative of the entire lot. In such cases, IPP are to sample this minimum batch of product after randomly selecting the day, shift, and time and notifying the establishment as set out in FSIS Directive 10,010.1.

IPP may submit one or more individually identified samples per box and are to follow FSIS Directive 7355.1 Use of Sample Seals for Program Samples and Other Applications. If necessary, they are to include additional cooling packages in the box to keep the sample or samples cool during transportation. To submit multiple samples, IPP may request larger boxes from the laboratory identified in Block 9 of FSIS Form 10,210-3 by sending an e-mail message to their e-mail addresses for sampling supplies.

To request any needed sample supplies, IPP are to contact the laboratory listed in block 9 of the form via e-mail and request sampling supplies using the following e-mail addresses:

Sampling Supplies - Eastern Lab
Sampling Supplies - Midwestern Lab
Sampling Supplies - Western Lab

IPP should request sampling supplies via e-mail at least 72 hours before sampling is to begin, and include the following information to ensure a prompt response from the laboratory:

- a. establishment number,
- b. daytime phone number,
- c. project code, and
- d. any supplies needed.

Reminder, IPP are to verify and update the Performance Based Inspection System Establishment Profile Extension Product Volume information to ensure that it remains accurate. Also, as needed, IPP are to update PBIS the Establishment Profile, Processing Tab Screen, HACCP Processing Categories, Raw Ground Product (03B), which identifies the processing categories and types of products.

Analysis of the Data

The Office of Public Health Science and the Office of Data Integration and Food Protection will analyze sample results for *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw ground beef. Specifically, the Office of Public Health Science will produce a weekly report on sample findings, along with an annual summary report that will be published on the FSIS internet. The Office of Data Integration and Food Protection will analyze the sampling data to identify trends (e.g., geographical, seasonal) and to evaluate program effectiveness (e.g. sample scheduling and collection rates). In addition, that office will use the data to calculate a quarterly performance measure of *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw ground beef that will be included in the Agency's quarterly performance report.

Refer questions to the Risk and Innovations Management Division through askFSIS at <http://askfsis.custhelp.com> or at 1-800-233-3935 by pressing 1 and then 4.



Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development